

# **ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

## **DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES**

### **NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



---

Contact:  
Steve Hayes, Area Management Biologist  
Eric Newland, Asst. Area Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 949-1320  
Fax: (907) 949-1830

Lower Yukon Area Office  
P.O. Box 127  
Emmonak, Alaska 99581  
Date Issued: 6/25/2012

#### **2012 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 17**

#### **Summer Update # 3, Districts 1-6**

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

#### **Assessment Projects**

Dall Point Test Fishery- 5.5-inch drift net project/YDFDA, ADF&G  
The cumulative summer chum salmon CPUE through June 24 is 488.16.

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)- 8.5-inch set net project/ADF&G, YDFDA  
The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE through June 24 is 1.52, which is below the average of 14.29 for this date. It is also below the average of 9.26 for historical late years for this date.

Additionally, test fishing for Chinook salmon with 8.25-inch drift gillnet gear is being conducting at the Big Eddy location. The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE through June 24 is 181.19.

Summer Chum Drift Test Fishery- 5.5-inch drift net project/ADFG, YDFDA  
The cumulative summer chum salmon CPUE through June 24 is 4,604.51 which is above the historical median of 2,197.67 for this date.

Mountain Village Chinook Drift Test Fishery- 7.5-inch mesh drift net project/YDFDA, ATC, ADFG  
The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE through June 24 is 602.68 which is below the (2010-2011) average of 688.85.

Pilot Station sonar project/ADFG  
Chinook salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar is estimated to be approximately 27,200 through June 24, which is below the average of 82,200 for this date. It is also below the average of

41,400 for historical late years for this date. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be approximately 612,600, which is above the median of 468,400 for this date.

#### Anvik River sonar project/ADFG

The summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be approximately 670, which is below the median of 4,200 for this date.

#### Gisasa River weir/USFWS

The Gisasa River weir was fully operational on June 20. As of June 24, no salmon have been recorded.

*NOTE: Other assessment projects will be added as they become operational.*

#### Age Composition

The Chinook salmon age composition from the 8.5-inch LYTF set nets through June 23 (Big Eddy) and June 21 (Middle Mouth) was 2% age-4, 26% age-5, 71% age-6, and 1% age-7 fish. Age-5 fish were slightly below average for this date and age-6 fish were above average. Females were 56%, above average. The sample size was 185 fish.

The Chinook salmon age composition from the 8.25-inch Big Eddy drift test fishery through June 23 was 3% age-4, 38% age-5, 55% age-6, and 4% age-7 fish. Females were 53%. The sample size was 114 fish.

The Chinook salmon age composition from the 7.5-inch Mountain Village drift test fishery through June 19 was 1% age-4, 42% age-5, 48% age-6, and 7% age-7 fish. Females were 35%. The sample size was 80 fish.

The chum salmon age composition from the 5.5-inch LYTF drift nets through June 24 (Big Eddy) and June 22 (Middle Mouth) was 53% age-4, 40% age-5, and 7% age-6 fish. The sample size was 509 fish. Age-4 fish were one and one-half times the average for this date and age-5 fish were two-thirds average. Females were 52%, slightly below average.

#### **Assessment**

Chinook salmon run timing continues to track considerably below historical averages, similar to trends observed in Chinook salmon runs throughout the state of Alaska. The Pilot Station sonar cumulative passage estimate of approximately 27,200 Chinook salmon through June 24 is well below the historical average of 82,000 for this date, and is also below the average passage estimates at this point for late run years, of approximately 41,400. The historical average first quartile of the run at the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) for late run years is June 20. Preliminary data suggest the 2012 first quartile at LYTF was approximately June 22-23 and based on historical upriver migration timing, the department anticipates the first quartile at Pilot Station sonar will be around June 25-26. The department will continue to monitor the first pulse as it passes Pilot Station sonar. However, current data would suggest the 2012 Chinook salmon run size is coming in at the lower end of the preseason outlook estimate of 109,000, or potentially lower.

The summer chum salmon run has been building considerably and subsistence fishermen report good catches when fishing. Summer chum salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar through June 24 is estimated to be approximately 613,000, which is above the historical median of 468,000 for this date. Based on historical run timing, the summer chum run is on track with the preseason outlook estimate of 1.5-2.0 million.

## **Current Management**

Consistent with preseason management strategies, subsistence fishing periods have already been canceled in lower river districts and similar actions are being implemented in upriver fishing districts based on migratory timing as Chinook salmon travel upstream. Based on the poor preseason outlook and the assessment information to date, additional measures are being taken to conserve Chinook salmon for escapement. Gear restrictions have also been implemented in the Coastal District and Districts 1-4 in an effort to conserve Chinook salmon and allow subsistence fishermen the opportunity to target summer chum salmon.

The current subsistence fishing schedules are as follows:

**Coastal District:** In the northern portion of the Coastal District from 62 degrees North latitude to Point Romanof, subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. The department will notify fishermen by Wednesday, June 27, concerning subsistence salmon fishing opportunity in the northern portion of the Coastal District.

In southern portion of the Coastal District, from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62° North latitude, the subsistence salmon fishing schedule is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day. Effective 8:00 p.m. Monday, June 25, gillnets will be restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon while allowing fishermen the opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon in this portion of the Coastal District.

**District 1:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 1, which includes the Black River, is currently closed and will remain closed during the next subsistence salmon fishing period which was scheduled to begin 8:00 p.m. Monday, June 25. The department will notify fishermen by June 27 concerning the next subsistence salmon fishing period and schedule for District 1.

**District 2:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 2 is currently closed. The department will notify fishermen by June 26 concerning the next subsistence salmon fishing period and schedule for District 2.

**District 3:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 3 is currently closed and will remain closed during the subsistence salmon fishing period which was scheduled to begin 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 27. The department will notify fishermen by June 30 concerning the next subsistence salmon fishing period and schedule for District 3.

**Subdistrict 4-A-Lower** (from ¾ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik and Grayling.

Subdistrict 4-A-Lower is currently on their regulatory subsistence salmon fishing schedule. By regulation, fisherman in Subdistrict 4-A may use drift gillnets during scheduled subsistence fishing periods on the mainstem of the Yukon River from June 10 to July 14. The 48-hour subsistence salmon fishing period scheduled to begin Wednesday, June 27, will be reduced to a 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period and gear restrictions are being implemented. Effective 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 27, subsistence salmon fishing gear will be restricted to gillnets with 6-inch or smaller mesh size and fish wheels must be equipped with a chute and all Chinook salmon caught in fish wheels must be returned to the water alive. Fish wheels must be closely attended while in operation. Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistrict 4-A-Lower will close at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 28, and will remain closed for the period that was scheduled from 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1, until 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 3, to conserve Chinook salmon. The department will notify fishermen by July 2 concerned the next subsistence salmon fishing period and schedule for this lower portion of Subdistrict 4-A.

Subdistrict 4-A-Upper: (from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk. Subdistrict 4-A-Upper is currently on their regulatory subsistence salmon fishing schedule which consists of two 48-hour periods each week from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 pm Fridays and from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays. By regulation, fisherman in Subdistrict 4-A may use drift gillnets during scheduled subsistence fishing periods on the mainstem of the Yukon River from June 10 to July 14. In the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A, fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

Subdistricts 4-B&C (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby. Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C are currently on their regulatory subsistence salmon fishing schedule which consists of two 48-hour periods each week from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 pm Fridays and from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

Fishermen in Districts 1-4 should stand by for short notice news releases regarding changes to subsistence salmon fishing schedules and gear restrictions.

Subdistricts 5-A,B&C: The regulatory subsistence salmon fishing schedule in Subdistricts 5-A,B&C consist of two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Thursdays, and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays.

Subdistrict 5-D: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day.

District 6: The subsistence salmon fishing schedule consists of two 42-hour fishing periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays.

The Old Minto Area: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays.

In Districts 5 and 6, fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day. Gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

The Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates will be available 24 hours a day at 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Emmonak ADF&G office at 949-1320. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.